

REMARKS

Claims 1 and 3-16 are pending in the present application, claim 2 having been cancelled herein. The Office Action and cited references have been considered. Favorable reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Claim 5 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claim 5 has been amended to remove the word “essentially.” Withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Applicant has amended the claims in minor ways to conform to U.S. practice. The changes to the claims are formal only, and do not affect the scope of the claims. The changes are not intended to be, nor are they, narrowing amendments.

Claims 1, 5-7, 10-13 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Coenraets (US 2006/0037718, hereinafter Coenraets). Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Coenraets; claims 4 and 8 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Coenraets in view of Griesser AG (GB Patent 1588438, hereinafter Griesser); claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C §103(a) as being unpatentable over Coenraets in view of Taylor (US 4,976,302, hereinafter Taylor). Applicant notes with appreciation the indication that claims 2, 3, 14, and 15, are allowable over the prior art. To advance prosecution, and without conceding the merits of the rejection, Applicant has amended the claims to place the allowed claims in independent form. In particular, amended claim 1 comprises all the features of claims 1 and 2 and amended claim 14 is rewritten in independent form by incorporating all features of original claim 1. Thus, the rejections of the claims over the prior art are moot.

Appln. No. 10/593,263
Amdt. dated March 19, 2009
Reply to Office action of September 22, 2008

Atty. Dkt. COENRAETS=13

In view of the above amendment and remarks, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections of record. Applicant submits that the application is in condition for allowance and early notice to this effect is most earnestly solicited.

If the Examiner has any questions, he is invited to contact the undersigned at 202-628-5197.

Respectfully submitted,

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